

**MINUTES OF THE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION
COMMUNITY MEETING OF MARCH 6, 2007**

COMMUNITY MEETING

7:00 P.M.

MARCH 6, 2007

PRESENT:

COMMISSIONERS: Bob Colven, Vice Chairman
 Dennis Hansberger
 Larry McCallon
 Richard P. Pearson
 A. R. "Tony" Sedano, Alternate

STAFF: Kathleen Rollings-McDonald, Executive Officer
 Michael Tuerpe, LAFCO Analyst
 Debby Chamberlin, Clerk to the Commission

ABSENT:

COMMISSIONERS:	Paul Biane, Chairman	Josie Gonzales, Alternate
	Kimberly Cox	Mark Nuaimi
	James V. Curatalo, Alternate	Diane Williams, Alternate

STAFF: Clark H. Alsop, Legal Counsel
 Samuel Martinez, LAFCO Analyst

7:05 P.M. – CONVENE COMMUNITY MEETING OF THE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION – HOOTMAN CENTER, RIM OF THE WORLD RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT, 2929 RUNNING SPRINGS SCHOOL ROAD, RUNNING SPRINGS.

CALL TO ORDER - FLAG SALUTE

Vice Chairman Colven calls the community meeting of the Local Agency Formation Commission to order and leads the flag salute.

DISCUSSION OF COUNTY FIRE REORGANIZATION IN GENERAL, LAFCO 3000, AND THE MOUNTAIN IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT OF THE SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT AS PROPOSED

LAFCO conducts a special community meeting to discuss the County Fire Reorganization proposal in general and the proposed formation of the Mountain Improvement District. This meeting was originally scheduled for February 13, 2007; however, due to inclement weather, it was rescheduled to this date. Notice of this community meeting was advertised as required by law through publication in The Sun, Alpenhorn News, Crestline Courier, Mountain News, and the Big Bear Life and the Grizzly, newspapers of general circulation in the Mountain Improvement District area. Individual mailed notice was provided to affected and interested agencies, County departments and those individuals and agencies requesting mailed notice.

Executive Officer Kathleen Rollings-McDonald states that the purpose of this community meeting is to provide an outline of the actions currently under consideration related to the proposal known as LAFCO 3000/3001—County Fire Reorganization, and to receive input from the community. Ms. McDonald reports that on July 26, 2005, the Board of Supervisors initiated an action to reorganize the Board-governed fire agencies, with submission of the proposal to LAFCO in August 2005. She says the Board

**MINUTES OF THE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION
COMMUNITY MEETING OF MARCH 6, 2007**

action identified as its rationale that the current structure of 28 separate fire entities was “unwieldy and inefficient” and identified there was a need to find a mechanism to increase revenues based upon service need/support for funding increases for the communities. She explains that the County’s application proposes: (1) the expansion of the sphere of influence of the Yucca Valley Fire Protection District to include the whole of the unincorporated area, excluding territory of existing fire providers (known as LAFCO 3001); and (2) the reorganization of the 28 Board-governed fire agencies, to consolidate these agencies into a single Fire Protection District (FPD), to be known as the San Bernardino County FPD, with Improvement Districts identified for four regions—Valley, Mountain, North Desert, and South Desert, and the special fire tax entities (known as LAFCO 3000).

Ms. McDonald gives a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which is on file in the LAFCO Office and is made a part of the record by reference herein. As outlined in the presentation on file, she discusses what the County’s application proposes and the required actions to be taken, including annexation of the territory within the County not a part of an existing independent fire provider to the Yucca Valley FPD, which is to be renamed the San Bernardino County FPD, and the creation of four Improvement Districts under the umbrella of the San Bernardino County FPD, with the Mountain Improvement District being discussed tonight. She outlines the various agencies that will be dissolved, which include within the Mountain Improvement District the Lake Arrowhead FPD (LAFPD), Forest Falls FPD, County Service Area (CSA) 38 and its Improvement Zones B (Angelus Oaks) and O (Baldwin Lake) and CSA 70 Improvement Zone PM-1 (Lake Arrowhead Paramedic). She discusses the agencies from which fire/ambulance/disaster preparedness powers will be removed, which include in the Mountain Improvement District CSA 70 (general), CSA 53 (Big Bear) and its Improvement Zone B (Fawnskin), CSA 79 (Green Valley Lake) and a portion of CSA 29 (Lucerne Valley). She outlines the eight improvement districts with current special tax requirements that will be formed, including Improvement District PM-1 (Lake Arrowhead Paramedic) within the Mountain area. She points out that CSA 70 Improvement Zone PM-1 (CSA 70 PM-1) will be dissolved and recreated as an Improvement District. She discusses the map displayed which shows the boundaries of the Crest Forest FPD and CSA 70 PM-1, noting that there is a portion of CSA 70 PM-1 which is also within the Crest Forest FPD. She says this is an issue that must be resolved since the Improvement District to be formed does not include that portion of CSA 70 PM-1 that is already within Crest Forest FPD.

Ms. McDonald says that the Commission is required to look at a number of factors when considering a proposal and she discusses that of importance to the Mountain community will be the question of sustainability of the entities from which fire powers are being removed. She says LAFCO staff will review the revenues that will remain with the Mountain Improvement District and the retained service obligations, both for the present and the foreseeable future. She notes that one element that must be taken into account when reviewing that factor is the anticipated structure based upon existing sphere of influence determinations for other fire providers within the Mountain Improvement District. She displays maps that show the areas proposed to be within the Mountain Improvement District and those agencies that will be excluded from the Improvement District. Ms. McDonald states that presentation of this proposal for Commission consideration is tentatively scheduled for the May 16, 2007 hearing, but she notes that the hearing date may be later to allow time to address alternatives for the Valley area. She states that Norm Kanold, Assistant County Administrator, will give a presentation on behalf of the County and the County Fire Agency.

Mr. Kanold states that Ms. McDonald gave an excellent overview of the County’s proposal. He says that the factors for the County’s effort which started back in 2002 for a reorganization still exist today. He says the first factor is an eroding tax base due to continuing city annexations, as well as stagnate tax growth in some of the remote areas that continue to affect the districts and present a possible financial jeopardy for those district operations and a possible curtailment of services. He says the second factor is the legal inability to share resources on a more regional basis due to the existing boundaries of the 32 separate dependent districts. He says the third factor is the enormous duplication of effort in administering 32 separate operation and financial budgets. He reiterates what Ms. McDonald stated that this reorganization will cause no change in the level of service and he says the funds in the Mountain Improvement District cannot be transferred to the other improvement districts.

**MINUTES OF THE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION
COMMUNITY MEETING OF MARCH 6, 2007**

Alan Reilly, a member of the Board of CSA 70 PM-1, states the Board initially had information that confused them and they thought that the paramedic district was being dissolved. He says they now understand that it will be formed into an Improvement District. Mr. Reilly says that as a Board member, he would like to participate in any discussions regarding the issue that a portion of the west side of CSA 70 PM-1 overlaps into Crest Forest FPD. He says that is a rather extensive piece of property on the tax rolls. Ms. McDonald responds that there are a number of CSA 70 PM-1's parcels in that area which will not be a part of the San Bernardino County FPD and she says the effect of that change will need to be evaluated since there is a per parcel tax. She says the only thing that can potentially be done is to transfer those per parcel taxes to the Crest Forest FPD. Mr. Reilly says that introduces an operational question that he is not in a position to answer at this hearing. However, he indicates that at this point in time, as far as paramedic service, it would be debatable whether Crest Forest FPD could provide the same level of service to the communities that is now provided by CSA 70 PM-1. Ms. McDonald states that staff was not aware of this overlap until last week. She says she understands that the revenues derived from CSA 70 PM-1 go to LAFPD to fund paramedic services through a contract, and that the services are provided outside LAFPD's boundaries into the overall area of CSA 70 PM-1, even though that area is not part of LAFPD. She says that the boundaries of CSA 70 PM-1 today require the LAFPD to respond into Crest Forest for paramedic service and she asks whether that is an operational decision that was made years ago.

Dan Wurl, Deputy Fire Chief of the San Bernardino County Consolidated Fire Agency, says CSA 70 PM-1 was established in the early 1980's to provide funding for paramedic service to the boundaries shown on the map displayed and he says it also provides paramedic service within the Twin Peaks/Rim Forest area of ALS, which at that time did not include Crest Forest FPD. He says there was an ambulance service being run in Crest Forest during that time but he says it was only for transport purposes. Ms. McDonald asks whether it is currently ambulance or paramedic service. Deputy Chief Wurl responds that it is actually paramedic service provided by placement of a paramedic on their ambulance. Deputy Chief Wurl indicates that the ambulance boundary, defined by the Inland Counties Emergency Medical Authority (ICEMA), is roughly the boundary of CSA 70 PM-1. Ms. McDonald says this reorganization proposal will have no effect on the ambulance service delivery boundaries and she says the question must be answered whether this is a paramedic service or an ambulance service with paramedics because they are separate issues. She reiterates that this question must be resolved as the proposal moves forward.

Commissioner Hansberger says he is not sure how this overlapping of boundaries occurred. He asks whether he is correct that Crest Forest FPD provides paramedic ambulance service within its boundaries. Deputy Chief Wurl responds that Crest Forest FPD provides paramedic ambulance service to everything west of the red line (CSA 70 PM-1's western boundary as shown on the map displayed) and he says there is a special tax that was approved in the early 1990's for that service. Commissioner Hansberger comments that Crest Forest FPD serves the area shown on the map in blue; that it has paramedic and ambulance powers throughout its District but has no tax rate through the District to cover paramedic service to the area east of the red line. Deputy Chief Wurl says that is correct; that area east of the red line is within CSA 70 PM-1 and has its own special tax for paramedic service. Ms. McDonald reiterates that paramedic, not ambulance, service is the issue; that ambulance service is a separate entity and discussion. Commissioner Hansberger says the problem is that, while ambulance and paramedic service are not exactly one and the same, paramedics can respond without the ambulance but the ambulance service is staffed by paramedics and relies on tax income from that area to staff the ambulance. Discussion follows, with Deputy Chief Wurl noting that the Crest Forest FPD hired a new Chief three or four months ago. He reports that this issue has already been discussed and says there may be opportunities to revisit this issue to see if there is another way to look at how services are delivered. In response to inquiry of Ms. McDonald, he says that there could possibly be a discussion about a physical change in the boundaries if that would help resolve the issue since the boundaries are inefficient and need to be cleaned up.

Vice Chairman Colven calls for further comments from the Commissioners or the public.

**MINUTES OF THE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION
COMMUNITY MEETING OF MARCH 6, 2007**

Commissioner Sedano comments that this would be a good opportunity for both the County and the Crest Forest FPD to get together to resolve this problem.

Joan Mosely, a reporter for the Mountain News newspaper, asks Ms. McDonald to address Green Valley Lake. Ms. McDonald reports that CSA 79 provides a number of services. She says its fire powers will be removed and the fire function and fire revenues will be transferred to the San Bernardino County FPD. She says the park and recreation, water and sewer services will be unaffected but their revenue stream will be altered.

Ms. McDonald says all information regarding these proposals and all the maps are available on the LAFCO website.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION, THE COMMUNITY MEETING IS ADJOURNED AT 7:40 P.M. TO THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSION ON MARCH 21, 2007, AT 8:30 A.M. IN THE SAN BERNARDINO CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 300 NORTH D STREET, FIRST FLOOR, SAN BERNARDINO.

ATTEST:

DEBBY CHAMBERLIN
Clerk to the Commission

LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

PAUL BIANE, Chairman